

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application of: TCHIRA, Steven

Application No.: 10/687,337

Group Art Unit: 3721

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Examiner: HARMON, Christopher R.

For:

Attorney Docket No.: DCW-002

PRE-FOLDED AND PRE-GLUED
FLOWER WRAP SHEETS AND
METHODS FOR MAKING

DECLARATION OF STEVEN TCHIRA UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.132

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

I am the original and sole inventor of the subject matter disclosed and claimed in the above-identified application. In addition, I have been involved in the development, manufacture and sale of wrapping products for flowers and plants for many years. My involvement includes selling floral wraps world wide, e.g., in the United States and Europe, through my company Decowraps since 1999. An overview of the products sold can be found at www.decowraps.com.

These products include floral wraps embodying the subject matter of the claims of the above-identified application. These floral wraps were developed by me to fulfill a longstanding and unresolved need within the industry for a flower wrap that functions like a flower sleeve but that has the aesthetic characteristics of a multi-layered hand-wrapped bouquet such as would be received from a street vendor or flower shop. The flower sleeve functionality allows for floral arrangements to be easily placed within the floral wrap. Decreasing time and waste and is particularly important for large floral orders that are time sensitive and for large floral distributors. Wrapping each floral arrangement by hand using one or more separate sheets of

material is time consuming, and a consistently uniform product is almost impossible to produce.

Flower sleeves, which is a term of art used to describe products that do not have a hand-wrapped appearance and that are generally tubular or conical in shape with one or more sealed seams, have previously been used to overcome to problems associated with hand wrapping of floral arrangements as the flowers are simply inserted into the formed sleeve. However, flower sleeves are aesthetically less appealing and yield an impersonal or mass-produced appearance. Increased aesthetics improves consumer acceptance of the product. In floral wraps of the present invention, a multi-layered appearance is achieved with only a single layer, eliminating the need for separate sheets of material and the time and costs associated with the use of multiple sheets of materials. When one of the separate sheets of material is, for example, colored paper, the colored paper can become water logged or torn over time. The benefit associated with eliminating the need for paper layers is important since flowers are often displayed for sale in water filled containers for extended periods of time.

From inception, products embodying the present invention have been extremely well received by floral distributors. The floral distributors immediately recognized the benefit of these floral wraps for packaging floral arrangements for shipment to large retailers. The recognized benefits of the floral wraps covered by the present invention result from the structure of the floral wraps including the single folded sheet of material that produces two separate overlapping layers, for example an opaque or translucent inner layer and a transparent outer layer that simulates plastic over colored tissue paper and peak sections that simulate a hand wrapped flower arrangement and that function to accept floral arrangements without wrapping each individual arrangement and without the lesser aesthetic qualities of a floral sleeve.

By solving a long standing and unresolved need in the industry, the floral wraps embodying the claims of the above-identified invention have meet with a very high level of commercial success. These floral wraps are sold to many floral distributors throughout the United States and Europe. The distributors package floral arrangements using the floral wraps and sell the packaged flowers to chain stores in the United States including Safeway, Stop and Shop in Boston, MA, Winn Dixie, Publix Super Markets, Kroger, Weiss Market and Wal Mart, among others. Products embodying the present invention as recited in the claims are one of the

most prominent floral wraps displayed at these retailers for sale to the public. The commercial success of these floral wraps and the acceptance of these floral wraps by distributors and customers have resulted in the sale of millions of units.

Respectfully submitted,

Date November 26, 2007



STEVEN TCHIRA